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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIJING 002864

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP AND EAP/CM

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TAGS: PREL MARR PHUM PGOV CASC SENV CH TW BM
SUBJECT: SUBJECT: EAP A/S CAMPBELL AND MFA DG ZHENG
ZEGUANG: BURMA, U.S.-CHINA RELATIONS, MIL-MIL, TAIWAN.

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Aubrey Carlson,
reasons 1.4 (b, d)

¶1. (C) Summary: The international community's engagement strategy and overall policy of sanctions against Burma have failed, said MFA North American and Oceanian Affairs Department Director General Zheng Zeguang in an October 13 working lunch with EAP A/S Campbell. A/S Campbell called for increased U.S.-PRC dialogue on Burma and requested China's assistance in engaging the Burmese government. Zheng suggested that U.S. and Chinese perspectives on the world were slowly coming into convergence and welcomed further partnership with the United States. Zheng stressed the importance of building a "harmonious" U.S.-China relationship. Zheng touched on China's "domestic pressures" and the importance of addressing the "core issues" of Taiwan, Tibet and Xinjiang. The two sides agreed there was room for growth in military-to-military relations. Zheng expressed optimism about the future of Taiwan and said he was encouraged by increased people-to-people exchanges and the prospects for "peaceful reunification." End Summary.

Burma

¶2. (C) In an October 13 working lunch with EAP A/S Campbell, MFA North American and Oceanian Affairs Department Director General Zheng Zeguang stated that the international community's engagement strategy and overall policy of sanctions against Burma had failed. Zheng described Burma as a "promising country" with many "complicated domestic issues" and welcomed U.S. engagement in the region to tackle the "easy problems" first.

¶3. (C) A/S Campbell called for increased U.S.-PRC dialogue on Burma and asked for China's help to engage the Burmese government, which often felt "dominated" by China. A/S Campbell said the United States was focused initially on "small steps" to build trust that would ultimately redistribute the balance of power and legitimacy between military and civilian regimes in the long term.

A New World View

¶4. (C) Asked about President Obama's global strategic views, A/S Campbell said President Obama had inherited many difficult challenges and had spent much time addressing them. The United States was ready and prepared to work with other nations, and at the center of U.S. strategy was the recognition of China's importance. Although at times complex, the U.S.-China relationship was the strongest in 30

years, working-level relationships were closer, and dialogues existed to address remaining distrusts, he concluded.

15. (C) Zheng responded that the U.S. perspectives on many global issues were getting closer and closer to China's. China was not "allergic" to partnership with the United States and was interested in a long-term healthy and stable relationship that was positive, comprehensive and cooperative.

The Importance of "Harmony"

16. (C) Zheng underscored the importance of the concept of a "harmonious society" in Chinese political philosophy and suggested that the term "harmonious" be included in descriptors of U.S.-China relations. In reply, A/S Campbell explained that the word "harmonious" was seldom used within the U.S. political lexicon and doing so would be misinterpreted by the public. A/S Campbell suggested that U.S.-China relations were better characterized as "essential," as in an "essential partnership."

Tires and "Core Issues"

17. (C) Touching on the Section 421 tire issue, Zheng said the way out was to increase "intensive" dialogue on the trade issue. "The United States has domestic pressures, but so does China," Zheng said. The 421 issue highlighted the need for both sides to consider the larger picture of the relationship, and the United States and China needed to

BEIJING 00002864 002 OF 002

continue to expand common interests and narrow differences in order to focus on the big issues on the horizon: Taiwan, Tibet and Xinjiang. These issues needed to be "cautiously handled." It was also important to avoid "stupid incidents" in the sea or in the air, Zheng said. A shared understanding on these "core issues" would place both countries in a better position to tackle common problems like North Korea, Iran and counter-terrorism.

Room for Growth in Mil-Mil Relationship

18. (C) A/S Campbell stated that the high degree of distrust within the U.S.-China military-to-military framework was an area of concern that required further dialogue. Zheng concurred, and outlined two points that would ease Chinese concerns, at least in the short run, if addressed. First, the PRC felt the United States had not reciprocated China's "openness" when it came to military visits. Zheng asked for greater "access" for the upcoming U.S. visit of Xu Caihou, Vice Chairman of the Central Military Commission. Second, Zheng wanted the United States to cease all air and sea military surveillance activities in China's exclusive economic zone (EEZ). He conceded, however, that if the United States could not stop all military surveillance activities in the EEZ, then it should at least take steps to reduce them.

PRC "Game Plan" on Taiwan

19. (C) Asked about the PRC's "game plan" for Taiwan, Zheng stated he was optimistic on the future of China-Taiwan relations, encouraged by increased people-to-people exchanges and hopeful on the prospects for "peaceful reunification." While Zheng was hesitant to speculate on whether President Ma would be reelected, he commented that there would be more "breathing room" for cross-Strait cooperation if Ma remained in office. China's focus was on the people of Taiwan and on the "Chinese citizens" on both sides of the Taiwan Strait, Zheng said.

10.(U) The Delegation cleared this cable.

HUNTSMAN